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THURSDAY, MAY 10, 1900.

Good Lord, Good Devil Politics.

It is a hard undertaking when one is compelled to walk on eggs under heavy penalty for breaking any of them, but that is about what the Republican platform makers of the year are called upon to do. The result is that they are not taking any unnecessary risks and are treading so lightly on dangerous subjects that if the same were water the feet of the walkers would not sink a hair's breadth or cause a ripple. We are minded to offer these reflections on reading with more or less satisfaction and amusement the smug and platitudinous observations on Porto Rico and the trusts of the platform put out by the Connecticut Republican State Convention, which adjourned at Hartford on Wednesday. The insular plank is as follows:

"We recognize the fact that many difficult questions confront the nation in the government and control of Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands. We believe that these questions can and will be handled to the complete satisfaction of the inhabitants of those islands, and in strict conformity to the terms of the Treaty of Paris. We believe that the nation should and ought fully acquired absolute title to distant islands of great strategic and commercial value. We believe that it is the highest sacred duty of the nation to secure to the people of those islands the blessings of liberty, peace, and happiness."

The "utmost patriots are exceedingly kind to conceal as much recognition of the existence of many difficult questions in connection with our relations to Porto Rico. They are also optimistic, but not unduly so, in predicting that these questions will be answered to the satisfaction of the islanders. Whether they will be settled in strict conformity to the terms of the Treaty of Paris will, of course, depend upon whether these terms conflict with the Constitution of the United States. If they should be found to so conflict, then they will not stand. But the Porto Ricans, though now suffering under illegal and unconstitutional oppression, will ultimately be freed and their American rights and citizenship affirmed and established as soon as the Supreme Court can get a chance to endorse the opinion handed down by the Federal District Court in the Ortiz case. Probably the Administration will be able to dodge the issue and prevent a test case from reaching the Supreme Court until after the Presidential election; but, meanwhile, Judge Lochren's decision will be accepted as law by all intelligent and honest Americans.

The Connecticut trust plank is a thing of beauty in its amiable differentiation of good and virtuous trusts, from the kind which are bad, naughty, and wicked, and utterly unworthy the love of the angels. It bleats:

"So far as these great corporations strive to raise the cost of living, to reduce the standard of wages, to the end that they may successfully enter and command the markets of the world to the detriment of the American summer and winter-warmer, they may well be endured. But the American people will never endure industries which result in injurious to laborers of extortionate prices to consumers, and we believe that Congress and the legislatures of the several States should enact laws which will protect the consumer against fraud, against stockholders against fraud, against laborers against injustice, and against extortion."

We have long recognized the distinction drawn by the Connecticut machinists between trusts which should be encouraged, and those which are altogether vicious and intolerable. The first class is composed of those which contribute royally to the Republican corruption fund. The second includes all that do not.

Lord Roberts' Advance.

The expectation yesterday that a general engagement would be fought at or near the Zand River appears likely to be disappointed. After careful reconnoitering, Lord Roberts has crossed that stream, and the Boers are reported as falling back from in front of his centre. There is fighting, but it is in the nature of a rear-guard action, and the opinion grows that both will not make any determined stand short of the Zand River.

The latest despatches seem to indicate an intention on the part of the British general to extend his right to Bethlehem. It is understood that Senechal, forty miles east of Windburg, has been occupied, probably by General French. That being true, it would be possible for one of the mounted divisions to reach Bethlehem today. Such a movement would be useful to Lord Roberts in drawing tighter the net he is trying to weave around the Free State command. In the Ladybrand and Picketburg district. Both of the points just named are believed to have been evacuated by the Boers, who may have gone to join another force with a huge supply transport at Colocan, where President Steyn is endeavoring to induce the combined columns to make a stand.

The occupation of Senechal and the imminent seizure of Bethlehem render the position of the Boers within the Free State most precarious. Brabant and Rundle are advancing against them from Thaba N'chu, and should strike them at Colocan today or tomorrow. It is a reasonable assumption that the roads to Windburg and Senechal are blocked and that British columns are disposed to meet any retreat in those directions. The only avenue of escape left open is by a long road following the Basutoland border to Bethlehem by way of Fouriesburg, and, supposing Bethlehem to be taken, that would appear to be impracticable.

Further up, the Harmsmith district is full of Boers, who will be a menace to the British advance right when it is extended to Bethlehem; at least until Buller moves into the Free State by Van Renen's Pass and so takes 'hem in rear. As far as the plans of the field marshal general are unfolded, the prospects are that he will not force the advance until the Colocan and Harmsmith commands are attended to. Then it is probable that Buller will con-

nect on the present British right at or beyond Bethlehem, and the army will swing around and envelop the Boer position at Kromstad or wherever Botha may elect to offer the next resistance.

The Desperation of Lord Salisbury.

Although, in his Primrose League speech, Lord Salisbury distinctly disclaimed any knowledge of menaces to the British Empire or to the United Kingdom of an imminent nature, his disclaimer will not be generally accepted without reserve, in view of the startling suggestions of his language. If it be vitally necessary for all Britain to at once turn itself into a rifle club, there must be some danger of which the Foreign Office is cognizant to justify the Prime Minister's appeal for the instant inauguration of such a movement.

The developments of the next few weeks or months may show that Lord Salisbury has reason for the distinct note of alarm which he has sounded. His speech reads like that of a man brought to bay and thoroughly frightened. It has the ring of desperation and is almost hysterical in tone. Unexplained by an underlying, dominating motive of some sort, it appears to be about the most maladroited utterance that any public man has indulged in during this generation. Why should Lord Salisbury select this time of all others to denounce the Irish people as disloyal and unworthy to be trusted with their own local government? The Queen, with her kindly tact, had recently all but healed the breach between the two islands, and Irish blood has been freely shed in the union jack on many a hard fought field in the recent past. Why should Lord Salisbury take the first opportunity after his return from Ireland to affront its people with wrath and bitterness?

Carefully scanned, the speech seems to imply that there is tangible danger of an invasion of England, and that the British people before long will be called upon to defend their homes, as the Boers and Free States are defending theirs. It means anything other than mental alienation, it must mean that the favorite French strategic theory of a successful military descent upon England has been seriously considered by the French Government, and that measures have been taken in preparation for an attempt to put it in practice. "Once allow a blow to be struck at the heart of the Empire," said Lord Salisbury, "and England's history is ended."

We are being treated to terrifying glimpses of the boogie man, all over the lot. Only a few days ago Secretary Root froze the public marrow by declaring that very shortly we would be compelled to engage in a terrific combat for the preservation of the Monroe Doctrine, which Mr. McKinley is trying to destroy through the Hay-Pauncefote treaty. Now comes the noble Marquis of Salisbury and tells us England has not a moment to spare in invading her own somewhere. What is the unenlightened citizen to think of prophecies of gore? Is the world going mad and getting ready for an all-around battle of Kilmenny?

The Cuban Carpetbag Scandal.

The Cuban postal service scandal is regarded by the Administration as a most grievous affair, coming at it does at a time when its effect upon the public mind is certain to be harmful to Republican interests. It is stated that the whole matter would have been glossed over and the investigation stopped, if at first the Washington authorities had suspected the extent of the evil. By the time it transpired that a widespread carpetbag conspiracy to loot the service in Cuba would probably be made, the public already knew enough to make it most dangerous to have it go on. However, the chances even now are that should certain persons be implicated, a way will be discovered for their escape.

Neely, the official charged with embezzling the postoffice funds, is at large on cash bail, at his home in Muncie, Ind., and declares his innocence of any wrongdoing whatever. He states that it is his desire to return to Cuba and square himself, but that the court will not permit him to do so. In short, Neely talks like a man who feels safely entrenched behind something. It may be integrity, or it may be the protection of some strong political influence. In any event, he takes the whole affair coolly and cheerfully.

The further exposure of the Administration carpetbag methods in Cuba will be awaited with universal interest; because, in this way, the people will acquire a clearer view of the administration and what they have to expect from the secrets of the Otis regime in the Philippines are disclosed. It seems to be finally settled that Governor Roosevelt's wish to be left alone is to be respected, even by Hanna, and the quest for a Vice Presidential candidate clean enough to sweeten the ticket will be resumed with vigor. Long is still kept posted up as the Administration choice, but probably only as a stalking horse. What the leaders really want is a man upon whom they can absolutely rely, and one who is heart and soul with them in their methods and designs. In such circumstances the selection should be narrowed down to between a very few persons. Taylor or Payne would be available. The former is a sort of party hero, and if he could be induced to venture as far out in the cold as Philadelphia might be able to stampede the convention to himself.

Among other things intended for whom it might concern we are inclined to think that Lord Salisbury's Primrose speech may have conveyed a delicate hint to his American colleagues to stand pat by the secret agreement, in view of the expected arrival of the Boer peace emissaries. Considering the ostensibly dove-like character of their mission, these Afrikaners are likely to raise a surprising lot of row in this country before they get done with it.

Although the Hanna Ship Subsidy bill is done for as far as the present session is concerned, it is very evident that it is to be made a star feature of the Republican performance next winter. That ninety million dollars in the Treasury is too juicy a plum for the party combination to lose. Probably Hanna may think that he can work in the Gathmann gun after the election, as well.

Protecting the Weak-Minded.

(From the Indianapolis News.)

If it be true as stated, that the postoffice intends to deprive divine leaders from the mails, it will be a movement in the right direction. If sincerity is a requisite for the facts be granted in order, there is no doubt that under this guise of Christianity is rampant and that thousands of people are deluded into going to the grave in trifling with their health.

On Parade.

(From the Indianapolis Journal.)

"How do you like your new spring suit, Kitty?"

"It fits so perfectly that I've been out somewhere every afternoon this week."

POLITICAL NOTES AND GOSSIP.

Bryan and the Senate.

One of the biggest Republicans in the country told a Times representative the other day that the Hannafites have agreed to let the electoral vote of Nebraska go to Bryan by default, but that they are now perfecting a plan by which they can feel assured of capturing the Legislature. "We have secured out a successor to Senator Thurston. We have figured out," said this Republican, "that a change of less than ten votes per precinct will give us the Legislature in Nebraska, and we are going to see to it that this rate of change is brought about. The Bryanites will concentrate their strength on the electoral ticket, and while they are doing that we will be looking after the legislative districts. Bryan expects to come to the Senate if he is defeated for President, and we propose to see that the House of Representatives and the Senate. That will end him, and then we shall hear no more of Bryan. Certainly the Democrats will have to disorganize the Hannafites in the Senate." Very little importance was attached to this startlingly frank talk until very vital feature of its statement. It was the statement that the Hannafites are at large to the Philadelphia Convention and is now in Washington. To a conspicuous leader of the fusion forces in the West Mr. Roosevelt yesterday said that the matured plan of the Republican managers and their allies contemplates a determined fight for the control of the Legislature to be held in the State of Nebraska. Both Senators are to be filled by the next Legislature at Lincoln—the one made vacant by the expiration of the term of Senator Allen, the other by the death of Senator-elect Hayward. Mr. Thurston's term expires in November. Both Senators are to be filled by the next Legislature at Lincoln—the one made vacant by the expiration of the term of Senator Allen, the other by the death of Senator-elect Hayward.

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Mr. Dubois is Confident.

The Hon. Fred Dubois, who was beaten for re-election to the Senate from Idaho by an accident three years ago, asserts positive confidence that he will come back to the Senate as Mr. Shoup's successor. "I suppose Shoup will be the unanimous nominee of the Republicans of Idaho for Senator," said Mr. Dubois to a Times reporter today. "But the Republicans will not control the next Legislature, and therefore Shoup will be defeated. The fusion arrangement between the Silver Republicans, Democrats, and Populists is perfect, and I feel no uneasiness about my re-election. Out of a total vote of about sixty-five thousand in Idaho the Republicans cannot poll more than twelve thousand. This will give them a hopeless minority in the Legislature at Boise City." Mr. Dubois came to Washington yesterday from Idaho, and before he left home he made a close and careful investigation of its political conditions and prospects. The strong probability of his re-election to the Senate is a large circle of friends and admirers in Washington.

Mr. Hanna Fighting Mad.

Two events of recent occurrence have put the Hon. Mark Hanna in such a towering rage that even those who are on the friendly terms with him are now afraid to seek his society. The Neely scandal is one of them, and the defeat of the Gathmann-Hanna gun scheme is the other. Why Mr. Hanna should feel affronted when asked for an expression of opinion on the Neely scandal is not apparent. If the alleged looter of the Cuban postal revenues is an appointee of Mr. Hanna, it is not his fault. The limited circle knows it. Indeed, it is believed that Mr. Hanna had nothing to do with the selection of Neely for the post in Cuba, but that the Hon. Perry Heath alone is responsible for Neely's appointment to the colonial service. Still, when Mr. Hanna is asked for an expression of opinion on an expression on the Neely scandal, he is not apparent. If the alleged looter of the Cuban postal revenues is an appointee of Mr. Hanna, it is not his fault. The limited circle knows it. 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